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Good Works.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part IX.

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(Continued.)

In the light of this simple description of the procedure at the Last Judgment we also understand Luke 16, 9, where Christ says: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that, when ye fail (*ὅταν ἐκλείπητε*), they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Luther says: "When I come before God's Judgment, a poor man to whom I have done good will stand in heaven and say: 'He washed my feet; he gave me meat, drink, clothing.' That man will certainly be my friend and a witness for my faith, whatever words he may use to express his testimony. At that time a beggar will be of more use to me than St. Peter." (St. Louis Ed., XI, 1951.) Aegidius Hunnius writes to the same effect: "On the Last Day the poor will receive their benefactors with the testimony which the Son of God will bear in their stead and in their name in favor of the godly persons who were wealthy. By this testimony He will show publicly that their faith was not hypocritical, but abounded in good works and therefore was a genuine and living faith. For this fact there will be as many witnesses as there are persons who were succored by them in this life." 1)

This public justification does, however, take place not only on the Last Day, but very often also before that day. For did not the Lord publicly absolve the great sinner in the presence of the Pharisee and his company? (Luther. St. Louis Ed., VII, 1456 to 1461.) And always according to the works. Christ said to the

1) In novissimo die recipient benefactores suos egeni suo testimonio, quod illorum vice atque nomine Filius Dei perhibebit piis divitibus, publice testificaturus, fidem eorum non inanem, sed bonis operibus gravidam atque sic vivam veram et non simulatam fuisse; cujus tot habebunt vivos testes, quot ex pauperum grege beneficentiam eorum in hoc mundo sunt experti. (Aegidius Hunnius, *De Justificatione*, 231.)

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

Lutheran Convention in New Zealand.—The annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Concordia Conference of New Zealand was held at Marton from February 3 to 6. As reported by the *Australian Lutheran*, the convention was preceded by a pastoral conference, which began on January 30. The doctrinal discussion centered in the study of Rom. 9. After the discussion final arrangements were made for the publication of the new New Zealand Lutheran church-paper *Fidei Defensor*, which is intended largely for mission purposes in the cities. A large part of the time was devoted also to the discussion of the question of religious instruction in state schools. Pastors were advised to avail themselves of the so-called Nelson System, under which ministers of religion may secure permission from the Education Board to utilize the school building and several half hours a week of the regular school hours for giving children religious instruction. At the same time, however, they were warned against unionistic practises. Since the need of more frequent pastoral conferences was keenly felt, a system of circulars had been inaugurated at the last meeting as a substitute for more frequent conferences, which the high boat and bus rates made impossible. The new system requires that the president circulate comments and anything that it is necessary for the pastoral conference to deal with and that the pastors reply to the circulars and at the same time circulate their replies.

On Sunday, February 3, the annual mission-festival was held at Marton, in which numerous worshipers from the neighboring congregations of Calcombe and Rongotea took part. The synodical mission-festival was combined with the jubilee of the first publication of Luther's Catechism. In his discourse, Pastor Altus referred to the Catechism as a convenient jewel-case containing the choicest and most important of God's gems. Additional services were held in the afternoon, in which Pastors Bruhn and Heidrich spoke on the origin and the permanency of the Catechism.

The synodical sessions began on February 4. Much attention was given to the missionary work in New Zealand. The progress made in this work is slow, but, nevertheless, satisfactory. A doctrinal essay read by Pastor Noffke on the subject "Can a Person Reborn Again Fall from Grace and be Lost?" was listened to with much interest and afterwards discussed with much vigor. The church was well filled for the occasion, large numbers of laymen attending the

sessions. Pastor Altus was reelected president; the secretary of the New Zealand Convention is Pastor H. Bruhn. May the Lord bless the work of our brethren in New Zealand to the glory of His name!

MUELLER.

Ohio Synod to Take Over Telugu Mission-Field.—Dr. C. V. Sheatsley, president of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Joint Synod of Ohio, is reported to have been commissioned to go to Europe this summer to negotiate with the Hermannsburg Missionary Society of Germany for the permanent transfer to the Joint Synod of the Telugu mission-field in India, which the Joint Synod has served since the war. The first American missionaries entered the field in 1920, at the request of the director of the Hermannsburg Mission, and, with the consent and approval of the India government, took over the remaining eight stations, thereby becoming responsible for the work in the entire field. In that year Dr. Sheatsley spent six months on the Telugu field, rendering effective aid in the formation of the Indian Conference of the Joint Synod of Ohio. During 1928 baptized converts exceeded 1,000. Efforts are made to increase the number of competent Indian mission-workers, and it is planned to raise \$50,000 to unite the various secondary schools at a centrally located place. At Renagunta a general hospital is nearing completion. Other institutions maintained are: A leper asylum, a medical dispensary, an orphans' home for boys, a home for old widows, a department for orphan girls, and a lace-school.

MUELLER.

A Problem in Modern Theology.—Modern theology, Lutheran and non-Lutheran, teaches that not every record of the Bible, but only certain portions of it are the Word of God and come to us with divine authority. Dr. J. A. W. Haas puts it this way: "What the theologian calls the Word of God, namely, the spiritual content of the Bible, is an authority of freedom." (*What Ought I to Believe*, p. 30.) The problem then is: How is the Word of God in the Bible to be separated from the fallible human words in the Bible? Scripture itself does not make the selection. Neither through italics nor by means of footnotes does it indicate whether a certain passage bears the divine or the human character. Who, then, is to make the selection? May I do it? Will the rest of the Christians be bound by my selection? I have no right to ask them to do so. They have the right to make their own selection. Then, there will eventuate as many kinds of Christianities as there are Christians. It is certainly a serious problem. Moreover, the selection I make will not only fail to meet with the approval of my fellow-Christians, but will never get my own lasting consent. I will continually be revising the list drawn up by me. Evidently a court of last resort is needed.

Here is the solution of the difficulty offered by modern theology. Lic. Dr. Stier (Breslau-Lutheran): "Holy Scripture is 'the Word of God' inasmuch and so far as it is the record mediating the divine revelation of salvation (Luther: God's Word is 'what deals with Christ')." Is Gen. 3, 15 God's Word? That depends upon whether this passage "deals with Christ." Who shall decide this question?

The decision cannot be left to an individual. Dr. Stier is well aware of that. "We must here finally consider the following. It is very possible, and, indeed, it very frequently happens, that, when this standard, 'what deals with Christ,' is applied to Holy Scripture, very different results are obtained. On the strength of this test a certain passage will look like God's Word to one more than to another. Indeed, this very thing may happen, that one and the same individual Christian will along these lines obtain at different times different results. So it is clear that the test, 'what deals with Christ,' as far as and as long as applied by an individual Christian, cannot produce an absolutely binding result as to how much of Scripture is the 'Word of God.' The results obtained on these lines can only be individualistic and subjective." Who, then, may here speak with authority? "The test, 'what deals with Christ,' can yield objective and absolutely binding results only when applied by the entire body of the believers. Here we must leave the matter rest: whatever in Scripture has proved itself, by this test, to be God's Word and in whatever degree it has thus proved itself, that much is, in that degree, God's Word." (*Frei-kirche*, 53, pp. 76. 91.) The decision is to be rendered by Christendom as a body.

C. H. Dodd, professor of exegesis at Oxford, is also ready to submit his case to this authority. In the general introduction by the editors of the series containing his book *The Authority of the Bible*, this principle is set down (p. VII): "Nor do we mean by 'experience' anything less than the whole experience of the human race so far as it has shared in the Christian consciousness. As Mazzini finely said, 'Tradition and conscience are the two wings given to the human soul to reach the truth.'" H. Wheeler Robinson subscribes to the same principle. In fact, he is one of the editors who enunciated it. However, in his book, of the same series, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit*, he gives warning: "In the last resort there can be no authority over the spirits God has created but that of the Father of spirits. No Church or man, no prophet or apostle, can write a final and absolute testimonial to God; all they can do is to give us an introduction to Him. When we know Him as He is known in religious experience, He commands our allegiance simply by being what He is and doing what He does." (p. 176.) At present we are concerned with Dr. Robinson's declaration that it is not the Bible itself, but "experience" which counts, the "consciousness" of Christendom. And this is the problem to be solved by modern theology, How is the referendum of all believers of all times to be obtained? They are to vote on the question, let us say, of whether Gen. 3, 15 "deals with Christ." Who is to receive the ballots? And in case there is no unanimous decision, shall the majority rule? Or is the vote of the theologians — in case that should be unanimous — to be decisive? And must we wait till the last man has changed his vote for the last time? It will not be an easy matter to get the opinion of all Christendom. And if we got it in some way, two more difficulties will emerge. In the first place, some of us are not at all ready to receive a "Word of God" which is such only to a certain degree. In the second place,

Dr. Robinson has declared at the outset that "no Church," no body of men, can write a final and absolute testimonial to God. The problem is how to get the opponents of the new court to submit to it and how to get its friends to submit to it. E.

The Bible IS the Word of God. — In connection with the foregoing item, we take pleasure in quoting the *Presbyterian*, a staunchly conservative journal, which has some good remarks on this important topic. In an editorial which appeared in the issue of April 18, it says of the respective advocates of the two statements in question: "Whereas, according to the one, the reader finds the Word of God in the Bible only as he is able, with more or less uncertainty, to discriminate between what is the Word of God and what is something other than the Word of God, according to the other, the reader gets into immediate contact with God Himself, speaking directly to his mind and heart, because whatever stands written in the Bible is for him a Word of God and, as such, possessed of divine authority." Concerning the attempt of liberal theologians to show that Christ held their view of the Scriptures, the editorial says: "It is altogether certain, and as a rule admitted by all schools of critics, that Christ dealt with the Scriptures of the Old Testament as the very Word of God. This being the case, it would seem clear that we cannot reject this view without saying in effect that Christ Himself was mistaken as to the true nature of Scripture. Can we look upon Him as our Lord and God and yet suppose that He erred in His conception of Scripture? Is it possible to escape the dilemma — either Jesus' view was the true one, and we may kneel in His presence, or His view was a mistaken one, in which case He cannot be regarded as our absolute Guide?" This constitutes an unanswerable argument for the position that the Bible not merely contains, but is the Word of God. A.

Fundamentalist Convention. — The twelfth convention of the World's Christian Fundamental Association was held in Indianapolis, Ind., from May 26 to June 2. In his announcement of the convention, Dr. W. B. Riley, president of the association, as reported by the *Lutheran Church Herald*, said: "There is not the least indication on the ecclesiastical horizon, of confederacy or even compromise. Modernism becomes more unbiblical and more antichristian daily, while Fundamentalism refuses to be budged from its belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures and the deity and redemptive work of Jesus Christ."

With regard to the *problems* that faced the convention, he said: "There are many leaders in the Fundamentalist organization who believe that the division between Fundamentalism and Liberalism cannot be longer delayed, that, in fact, it has already taken place and the time has come to recognize the same and even to emphasize it, since there is no hope whatever of healing the breach."

Dr. Riley also voiced his opinion on the *problem of union*. He said: "Since the denominations have split down the center of Liberalism, it is the function of Fundamentalism to unite the Fundamentalists of every denomination in one world-wide organization; in fact, that has been the objective of the Fundamentalist movement from

the beginning. At first there was some hope that we might save the denominations and turn them back to the former faith. That hope is so attenuated now that few entertain it, and in the union of all Fundamentalists is the prospect of the future." MUELLER.

Theological Counterfeiting.—"It is a deplorable fact that within the Christian Church, as outwardly constituted, the statement 'I believe in Christ' actually does not say much, because these words are made to convey totally different meanings." (*Christliche Dogmatik*, II, 503.) Faith is made to mean its very opposite. While St. Paul teaches that we are justified and saved "by faith, without the deeds of the Law," Modernism, following the lead of the Roman Catholic, Pelagian, theology, makes salvation by faith mean salvation through the deeds of the Law. It commits a double crime. It offers salvation by works. And in order to insure reception of its teaching, it labels it "salvation by faith," offering its pewter for pure gold. This double crime is committed by Harry F. Ward, professor of Christian Ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York. And the *Western Christian Advocate* becomes *particeps criminis* by circulating the counterfeit in its issue of January 10, 1929. The article is entitled: "The Function of Faith in the Modern World." The faith it describes has absolutely nothing in common with the Christian faith. It is described thus: "Jesus told His followers to fear not men, who could only destroy the body, but to fear Him who had the power to cast both body and soul into hell, that is, He bade them believe and act upon the immortality and invincibility of God and the soul. He took the long look, made the leap of faith, and demonstrated that men could not kill Him. To-day we glibly say that history has demonstrated that He was right, and then we refuse to follow the same course in our own affairs — so we have no victory. . . . The creative scientist is emphatically a man of faith. He has faith enough to believe that a certain thing can be discovered, faith enough to act upon his belief by testing out his guesses in a series of experiments until presently his faith is justified by its works. It is one of the startling paradoxes of the modern situation that in the last century there has been very much more faith exhibited in the laboratories of science in dealing with the physical universe than in the laboratories of religion in dealing with human beings. . . . That is one reason why Jesus is such a permanently revolutionary force in human society. He believes in the possibilities of all men, the worst and the lowest. His faith was in the infinite worth of the downmost man. Therefore, wherever He touches life it moves upward. . . . Are we, then, to overcome the world and to transform its organization merely by faith in each other without any faith in God? But how much was Jesus' faith in man tied in with His faith in God? He believed not simply in man, but that man could become godlike, with a sublime, indestructible faith. Because the God whom He reveals is an ethical Being, whose nature is righteousness and love, His belief in the possibility of man becoming godlike is, then, a belief in the possibility of God to manifest Himself in human living. Here is the mystery and the power of the incarnation. To doubt the capacity of man to become godlike, to doubt

the possibility of eliminating the war system and the profit system from human organization—what is it but to doubt God, to deny Him, to frustrate Him, to make His realization in human life impossible?" The concluding paragraph reads: "In the trenches during the Great War, just before going over the top for the last time, Donald Hankey wrote in his notebook, 'Faith is betting your life there is a God.' That is it; risking your life on the belief that God and the universe are with you in the search for righteousness, justice, truth, and love. With all reverence, may we not also say that there is a sense in which God risks His life upon us? This human process into which there has gone and is still going His exhaustless energy, is capable of one of two outcomes—it may continue to develop in all godlikeness, or it may destroy itself in unutterable greed and bestial conflict. And God leaves the issue to us. If, then, we have as much faith in Him as He has in us, together we may continually release the creative capacity that will everlastingly make a new world by making human beings more like God." According to this teaching, the publican should not have prayed: "God be merciful to me a sinner," but rather: God, help me to realize my infinite worth! According to this teaching, Article IX of the Methodist Articles of Religion is all wrong: "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort." The "faith" of Professor Ward and of the *Advocate* is counterfeit.

E.

The Pope and Religious Liberty.—About half a year ago the Pope was quoted to have lauded our country in these terms: "What a glorious country is America! There you have liberty of conscience. If one wishes to be a Catholic, he can be a Catholic; if one wishes to be a Protestant, he can be a Protestant; if one wishes to be a Jew, he can be a Jew. Would to God it were the same in every country!" The *Presbyterian* offers some apt comments on these intriguing words of the Pope. It says: "He must be a very poorly informed and very easily deceived person who is misled by such words as these from such a source. Liberty is the one thing that Rome is ever demanding for itself where it is weak and in the minority and that it is ever refusing to others where it is strong and in the majority. . . . One of its leaders said, in autocratic *pronunciamento* on this subject, 'Wherever power is in the hands of others, the Roman Catholic Church demands recognition and equality, because it ought to have them. Wherever it is in power, it refuses these to others, because no one has a right to them but the one Holy Church.' . . . One great element of danger arises from such deceptive and plausible expressions as the one quoted in this article from the Pope of Rome. If he admires religious liberty, let him show it by seeing that it is granted in countries which he controls. He is flatteringly trying to make the ignorant ones think that he wishes it. He wishes it for himself and his own organization alone. If he had the power to do so, he would clamp down the irons on Protestantism as effectually and as rigidly as in the days of the Inquisition. Let us not forget it."

A.

Concerning Freemasonry.—The *Lutherischer Herold* submits recently published figures on the strength of Freemasonry in the world which our readers will find interesting. It is estimated that the number of Freemasons throughout the world is 4,400,000. North and South America show the largest percentage in this respect, namely, 18,882 lodges and a total membership of more than 3,500,000. In England there are said to be 322,000 Freemasons; in Ireland, 50,000; in Scotland, 90,000. In continental Europe, if we except France, there are approximately 2,000 lodges, with 210,000 members. Freemasonry does not present a solid front at present, because ever since the war the leading German Grand Lodges refuse to have any official connection with the Grand Lodges of other countries, nor do they take part in international Masonic meetings of a private nature either.

A.

Protest against "National Origins" Clause.—The religious press has voiced considerable protest against the so-called origins plan of immigration, which, while purporting to bring about a just distribution of the quotas to the various nations, manifestly discriminates against Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and the Irish Free State. The "National Origins" plan would allow 153,714 yearly as against the present of 164,647, which amounts to a very slight difference in totals. However, the total for England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland would be increased from 34,007 to 64,721, while the quotas from the Irish Free State would be reduced from 28,567 to 17,853. Germany would be cut from 51,227 to 25,957; Sweden from 9,561 to 3,314; Norway from 6,453 to 2,377; Denmark from 2,789 to 1,181. The *Lutheran Church Herald* says: "The fixing of the new quotas according to national origins is entirely arbitrary, ignoring the law. The propaganda to put this over, contrary to the law and the facts in the case, has been sponsored by men resorting to the cheapest kind of appeal to Ku Klux chauvinism and fraudulent endorsement claims."

MUELLER.

An Attack on Princeton Seminary.—It is well known that Modernistic Presbyterians have been attacking the Princeton Seminary, which is known for its conservative attitude. Of late an attempt has been made, not only to discredit its doctrinal position, but likewise the methods of teaching employed there. A young man who for a while studied there has given this description of the methods according to which he and his fellow-students had to work: "In the upper classes of Princeton University and in the Graduate School of Princeton he was expected to do a certain amount of research work and to approach his studies in a scholarly, scientific way. In the Theological Seminary, in one class, a professor expected him to take exact notes, to memorize these notes, and to recite them the next day. Another professor assigned so many pages of a book to be read and studied and recited on each session. Certain topics were tabued. Other angles of the subject were not permitted to be fairly discussed and other philosophies and doctrines not presented fairly and fully, but attacked bitterly, without scientific or scholarly study. There was no research work. It is supposed to be a graduate seminary, but this

lad thought he had returned to a junior high school. At least the methods used were junior high school methods. Finding the seminary neither scientific nor scholarly in its approach and discovering the harsh contrast between the methods of the Theological Seminary and the modern university graduate school, he left the ministry in order to be more scholarly in his approach to life." We suppose that this is a grossly exaggerated picture, and one would be doing Princeton Seminary an injustice if any importance were attributed to it. A.

A Sign of the Impending End. — The daily papers of late speak of an enormous disaster which in 1908 overtook an area in Siberia one hundred miles square. It consisted of the bombardment of this territory by meteors, which, when coming in contact with the earth, wrought terrific havoc. An expedition led by Prof. Leonide Kulik, so the *Commonweal* observes, has made a study of the damage caused by the meteors. The comment of this journal deserves being quoted. "It must be confessed that little could be done to ward off so terrific a bombardment. Even confidence in 'the future progress of the race' would, in all likelihood, be of no avail. Doubtless such cataclysms are exceedingly rare, though mankind seems to have conserved vague memories of some of them. Most popular impressions of the world's end stress some such collision between stellar masses. Just how the *finale* will come, however, matters very little. Come it must; and so, if humanity has been assigned no goal of the spirit, its petty meanderings here below would be futile indeed." We are here reminded of Luke 21, with its prediction of signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars heralding the approaching dissolution of the universe.

A.

Glimpses from the Editor's Window.

A German religious journal reports that in Norway a Luther society (*Lutherbund*) has been formed, which endeavors to strengthen the position of Lutheranism with the Norwegian people and to bring about a more thorough understanding and appreciation of the things the Lutheran Church offers and stands for. Power to this organization!

At the beginning of April the papers reported that Dr. Adolph Deissmann, professor at the University of Berlin, had arrived in America and was intending to make a lecture-tour through various parts of our country. While a brilliant writer and teacher, Dr. Deissmann is a confirmed Liberal.

Touching cooperation in the conduct of interdenominational schools of religion connected with universities, the executive board of the U. L. C. recently adopted some good paragraphs, one of which reads: "Cooperation in the conduct of such schools of religion is contrary to our Lutheran traditions, involves us in situations over which we have no control, and jeopardizes Lutheran unity." The unionistic character of the teaching in such schools should have been pointed to also.

According to the *Watchman-Examiner*, Dr. J. C. Masee resigned the pastorate of the Tremont Temple, Boston, to enter evangelistic work. During the seven years of his pastorate at Tremont Temple he is said to have received into the church 2,489 members, and more than one million dollars have been raised in free-will offerings.

Dr. Gerald Birney Smith, professor of Christian Theology in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, died at Dayton, O., on April 4. He had been a member of the faculty of the University of Chicago since 1892. His many books on theology showed that he was a full-fledged Modernist.

What is the matter with present-day literature? Robert M. Gay, lecturer at Harvard, says of the books of contemporary authors: "They may be astonishingly clever, but that is just what is the matter with them; they are the products of the head rather than of the heart, of knowing men, rather than of believing men. Contemporary critics are telling us that we shall have no more great literature until mankind regains some faith in the supernatural and in the nobility of man. Until some such faith is found, our fiction is doomed to an ever-increasing meanness, ugliness, and disillusionment." One word tells the tale — materialism.

We note with satisfaction that, when the answers to a recent theological questionnaire, consisting of fifty-six questions, were tabulated, it was found that, as *Time* reports, within the denominations the Lutherans had greatest unity and agreed on 44 out of the 56 answers. Next most united were the Episcopalians, who agreed on 25 answers. The least united were the Methodists. . . . Methodists agreed on only 11 of the 56 questions. Too bad Lutheran agreement was not of the one-hundred-per-cent. kind!

The *Lutheran Standard* of April 6 reports: "Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, Pa., expects to complete the construction of its new library building in time for dedication during commencement week in June. The building, erected at a cost of \$75,000, of brick, granite, and cast-stone trim, will be known as the M. Emma Weber Memorial Library. Dr. H. H. Weber, of York, Pa., former General Secretary of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the United Lutheran Church in America, subscribed the funds as a memorial to his wife. The new building will have a capacity of one hundred thousand volumes."

The *Sendbote* informs its readers that there are at present about 350,000 Roman Catholic priests on this globe, almost 110,000 of whom are engaged in mission-work. Many of these missionary-priests are natives of Asiatic or African countries. This vast army is superintended by a staff in Rome to which, among other dignitaries, thirty cardinals belong. On account of the news supplied by the great number of missionaries scattered throughout the world, the office of this commission in Rome is a gigantic information bureau in the service of the Pope.

In the *Christliche Apologete* a statement of Reimarus, the author of the infamous *Wolfenbuettler Fragmente*, is quoted, in which this bitter enemy of the revealed Gospel endeavors to ridicule the claims of universality made by the Christian religion. Reimarus asserted that Christianity could never attain to the position of a universal religion because the Bible, its sacred book, would never be translated into as many as five hundred languages. The *Christliche Apologete* points out that the Bible, either in its entirety or parts of it, has by this time been rendered into 830 languages. For the sake of comparison the same paper remarks that Homer has been translated into about thirty and Shakespeare into about thirty-five tongues.